



Greg Gianforte
Congress of the United States
Montana

September 5, 2018

State Administration and Veterans
Affairs Interim Committee
Capitol Building, Helena, MT 59620

Dear Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee. I apologize my duties in Washington prevent me from being here in person.

I want to thank our veterans and their families for their selfless service and sacrifice. Thanking them also means honoring the commitments made to them to provide healthcare, education, and retirement benefits.

The passage of Senator Isakson's VA MISSION Act into law is a step in the right direction. I voted for this legislation that extends the VA CHOICE program for one year while the Veterans Administration consolidates community care programs and reforms the claims, authorization, and payment processing system to ensure accurate and timely payments.

The VA MISSION Act provides more resources for traditional VA care, and increases loan repayment programs to encourage more medical students to work at the VA when they graduate, including the addition of dentists to VA medical scholarship programs. It also expands the post 9/11 caregiver benefit to other disabled veterans in a phased-in process over 2 years. The legislation also requires the VA to make all hiring, separation, and vacancy information public.

I do believe we need to ensure solid and sustained leadership at the Department of Veterans Affairs, both nationally and here in Montana. There has been a pattern of rapid turnover in the Montana VA, which I raised before the House Veterans Affairs Committee during my testimony in May. I will be meeting with the head of the Rocky Mountain Veterans Integrated Service Network in September to discuss this and other issues.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on implementation of the VA MISSION Act to ensure that Montana's veterans receive the care they were promised. Please know that my door is always open, and I and my staff stand ready.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Gianforte', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

GREG GIANFORTE
MEMBER OF CONGRESS